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U.S.S.N. 10/719,550

Specification Amendments

Please replace the Abstract with the following re-written paragraph:

0039 A new and improved process which is effective in removing tungsten residues from a tungsten plug structure after a tungsten etchback process is carried out on the structure. The tungsten plug structure is fabricated by providing a bottom dielectric layer on a substrate, providing a bottom metal layer on the bottom dielectric layer, providing a top dielectric layer on the bottom metal layer, providing a via opening in the top dielectric layer, filling the via opening with tungsten, and removing the excess tungsten layer by tungsten etchback. The process of the invention includes removal of tungsten residues from the tungsten plug structure by application of an oxidant solution to the structure after the excess tungsten layer is etched from the structure and prior to deposit of a top metal layer on the tungsten plugs.

Please replace paragraph 008 with the following re-written paragraph:

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008 In the semiconductor fabrication industry, minimization of particle contamination on device structures increases in importance as the integrated circuit devices on the wafers decrease in size. With the reduced size of the devices, a contaminant having a particular size occupies a relatively larger percentage of the available space for circuit elements on the wafer as compared to wafers containing the larger devices of the past. Moreover, the presence of particles in the integrated circuits compromises the functional integrity of the devices in the finished electronic product. Currently, mini-environment based IC manufacturing facilities are equipped to control airborne particles much smaller than 1.0 micron [[m]], as surface contamination continues to be of high priority to semiconductor manufacturers. To achieve an ultraclean wafer surface, particles must be removed from the wafer, and particle-removing methods are therefore of utmost importance in the fabrication of semiconductors.